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**Subordination and dispositions:
Palestinians' differing sense of injustice,
politics, and morality**

Silvia Pasquetti

Abstract

Drawing on Bourdieu's theory of *habitus* and incorporating insights from feminist and critical race and legal scholarship on the creation of "subjugated knowledge," this article investigates the dispositional production of perceptions of injustice, politics, and morality among differently situated members of a subordinated population. Based on ethnographic fieldwork within and across the West Bank and the Israeli city of Lod, I track how the political rhetoric that Lod Palestinians use to describe key issues in their lives—for example, drug use and dealing, and poor formal education—differs from the moral judgments through which West Bank Palestinians, who have moved to the city and remain there precariously, interpret the same issues. This article traces this interpretive divergence to two dispositional formations: one that has emerged under protracted conditions of denigration, criminalization, and surveillance in Lod and the other that has been produced over time by military rule in the West Bank and imported to Lod by West Bank Palestinians who moved there. It concludes by calling attention to the role of dispositions in studies of identity-formation and boundary-work as well as issues of submission and resistance in contexts of subordination.

Keywords: *Experiences of subordination · Bourdieu's approach to cognition · Feminist theory of subjugated knowledge · law and illegality · interpretive work · Urban Israel and the West Bank*

What is ‘learned by the body’ is not something one has, like knowledge that can be brandished, but something one is.

- Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice* (1990)

On some level, people who are oppressed usually know it.

- Patricia H. Collins, *Black Feminist Thought* (1991)

Introduction

At the main entrance to a segregated Arab district of Lod, an Israeli city,¹ one finds some cement barriers left on the ground where a police checkpoint had been. When I first visited the district on a hot afternoon of July 2004 the police checkpoint was operating. The two policemen who manned the checkpoint stopped me and the three Jewish Israelis who accompanied me. After deciding that we did not fit the profile of drug-addicts, they warned us that the district was “good for drugs, not for tourism.” My Jewish Israeli companions drove through the checkpoint claiming their right to unrestricted movement but once inside the district they felt unsafe and decided to track back. During our brief car “tour,” while the streets were deserted, I observed a few people peering out of the windows of houses. Driving back through the checkpoint while the policemen waved at us and we remained silent, I asked myself how those people at the windows—Israeli Palestinians living in Lod—thought and felt about the checkpoint, the police officers who manned it, and the unknown car that crossed it; and how their orientation towards these objects and encounters was connected to their incorporation in the state and the city as subordinated minority citizens.²

My theorization of the relationships between structures and histories of subordination and the formation of sensitivities and perceptions developed further through my subsequent fieldwork within and across the city and the adjacent West Bank. In particular, in the city, I found that two segments of Palestinians—Israeli Palestinians who were born in Lod and West Bank Palestinians who had moved to the city as adults and remained there precariously³—attached distinct, often divergent, meanings to the everyday objects, events, and encounters that marked their marginalized lives in the city’s Arab districts, expressing different perceptions of injustice and how to struggle against it. The above-mentioned police checkpoint offers a good illustration of this interpretive divergence. Among Lod Palestinians,⁴ the view of the barriers left behind after the dismantling of the

¹ Lod is often defined as a “mixed” city to highlight its exceptional status as an urban space including both Jewish and Arab citizens. Yet, rather than “mixed,” this urban space is divided along ethnonational lines with Palestinians, about 25 percent of the city’s total population, mostly living in segregated and under-serviced areas. It is also marked by the mass displacement of its Palestinian residents that occurred during the 1948 war, which led to the establishment of the Israeli state. Indeed, before 1948 Lod was an Arab town, which was called Lydda.

² This brief field experience also raised questions about perceptions of threat and understandings of inside-r and outside-r among Jewish Israeli citizens and law-enforcement officers.

³ The West Bank Palestinians I met in Lod were either spouses of Israeli Palestinians or workers. Most spouses of Israeli Palestinians had precarious legal status, ranging from temporary permits to expired ones while most workers had undocumented status.

⁴ I use “Lod Palestinians” and “Arab residents of Lod” to refer to those Palestinians who were born in the city or, while being born in other localities inside the state, lived there since childhood. More generally, I will use “Israeli Palestinians,” “Palestinian citizens,” and “Arab citizens” to refer to those Palestinians who have Israeli citizenship.

police checkpoint triggered comments about the unjust logic of law-enforcement practices in the city, for example, the deployment of aggressive forms of policing in the Arab but not in the Jewish areas. By contrast, for West Bank Palestinians, those physical traces of a police checkpoint—like any other object or practice related to drugs and criminality in the city’s Arab districts—constituted a visual marker of a problem of morality among their fellow-Palestinians in the city, prompting talks about the “healthier” lifestyle in the West Bank than in Lod. More broadly, Lod Palestinians attached political meanings to key issues in their lives, from school dropouts to criminality, interpreting them as products of unjust vertical ties binding them to the Israeli state, especially its law-enforcement agencies. However, West Bank Palestinians approached these issues as worrisome symptoms of damaged moral ties within the Palestinian ethnonational community in the city.

Addressing how differently situated members of a subordinated population imbue the same events, objects, and encounters with distinct senses of injustice, political claims, and moral concerns requires paying analytic attention to their distinct individual and historical group trajectories. It also requires exploring how powerful institutions, for example the state and the law, regulate access to symbolic and material resources, thus conditioning how subordinates negotiate their lives and experience their surrounding environment. This is particularly important in the case of the Palestinians who, since the mass displacement and social destruction that occurred in 1948—what most Palestinians call “*Al-Nakba*,” (The Catastrophe)—have negotiated their lives in the contexts of differential forms of subordination. While Palestinian nationhood as group identity was already incipient in the nineteenth century (Khalidi 1997), since 1948, Palestinians have been “a people united by a sense of their peoplehood, yet divided by the very experiences which have created the collective sense of self” (Landy 2013, p. 149). This predicament of unity and divisions has shaped the production of memories among different segments of Palestinians (for instances, R. Davis 2011; Kassem 2011; Sa’di 2002; Sa’di and Abu-Lughod 2007). As this article demonstrates, it has also shaped everyday perceptions of injustice.⁵

The question of the production of meanings in everyday life is central to different scholarly traditions ranging from the “culture as text” approach supported by Geertz (1973a, 1973b; 1993 [1983], pp. 55-70) in his interpretive “anthropology of understanding” to the focus on the “primary experiences of the world” in various strands of phenomenology, pragmatism, and interactionism (see, e.g., Berger and Luckmann 1967; Blumer 1969; Peirce 1960; Schutz 1970; Schutz and Luckmann 1973). However, in this article I turn to Bourdieu’s (1977, 1990, 2000) theory of *habitus* as a particularly promising approach to the study of interpretive work—especially the formation of perceptions of injustice—within subordinated populations whose members live under varied material and discursive conditions of subordination.

The Bourdieusian concept of *habitus* is a sequenced and stratified formation of “propensities to think, feel, and act in determinate ways, which then guide them [social agents] in their creative responses to the constraints and solicitations of their extant milieu” (Wacquant 2005, p. 316). The sedimentation of these

⁵ As Kassem (2011, p. 6) argues in her oral histories with elderly Palestinian women in Lod, memories of the past and interpretations of the present are linked in complex ways. More work is necessary on this relationship especially in the case of Palestinians for whom traumas such as displacement and imprisonment are not only memories of the past but also experiences of the present.

dispositions takes place over time. As illustrated by Bourdieu's (1977, pp. 90-91) example of how Kabyle children learn the positions of objects and the division of spaces, this sedimentation starts with the acquisition of dispositions "in early childhood, slowly and imperceptibly, through familial osmosis and familiar immersion" (Wacquant 2013, p. 195). This primary *habitus* is particularly resilient to change and plays an important mediating role in the acquisition of other dispositions later in life. That said, secondary, tertiary, and subsequent dispositions acquired through new experiences and interactions interact with and exercise some influence on the primary *habitus*, leading to relatively integrated or disjointed dispositional formations depending on people's life circumstances. Bourdieu conceptualizes *habitus* as "a socialized subjectivity," arguing that "the individual, and even the personal, the subjective, is social, collective" and that "the human mind is *socially* bounded, socially structured" (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, p. 126 emphasis in original).

Along these lines, this article uses Bourdieu's theory of *habitus* to explore differences in dispositions and perceptions in the case of two segments of Palestinians who, while currently living together in the same city, have spent their childhood and early adult life under different conditions of ethnonational subordination. Specifically, I trace the differences in perception between Israeli and West Bank Palestinians living in Lod to two dispositional formations that have emerged over time within these two segments of Palestinians. I give particular attention to the primary layers of *habitus* formed through the experience of "growing up Palestinian"⁶ in an Israeli city and in the West Bank respectively. I argue that the political rhetoric used by Lod Palestinians to describe key issues in their lives such as drug use, drug dealing, and low formal education, is connected to the oppositional dispositions created by their protracted incorporation in the Israeli state as denigrated and surveilled minority citizens with severely limited access to socioeconomic mobility. These dispositions orient them towards interpretations of the law as a tool of control and dispossession and towards the attachment of meanings of resistance to their micro-attempts to improve their living conditions outside the gaze of the state. On the other hand, the moral lens through which West Bank Palestinians interpret the same problems among their fellow-Palestinians in Lod can be traced to their dispositional orientation towards upholding shared standards of behavior as a medium for collective resistance against military repression in the West Bank. West Bank Palestinians' moral judgments about the everyday predicament of Palestinians in the city are connected to their disposition to invest in moral cohesion as a way to resist military rule in the West Bank. They stand in interpretive tension with Lod Palestinians' perceptions of injustice, which imbue survival practices, including participation in the illegal economy, with political meanings and reject moralizing discourses on their lifestyles, whether from the Israeli state or fellow-Palestinians.

This brief discussion of my findings and arguments highlights how both segments of Palestinians are oriented by oppositional rather than submissive dispositions in their interpretive work. In order to fully attend to these "dispositions to resist" (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, p. 81), including their discursive expression, this article supplements Bourdieu's theory of *habitus* with insights from feminist and critical race and legal scholarship on the production of "subjugated knowledge" and "theories of justice" (e.g., Bromell 2013; P. Butler

⁶ I borrow this expression from a book on West Bank Palestinians entitled "Growing up Palestinian: Israeli Occupation and the Intifada Generation" (Bucaille 2004).

2009; Collins 1991; Richard Delgado and Stefancic 2012; Matsuda 1989). This theoretical integration is useful because one limitation of Bourdieu's framework is that it overemphasizes misrecognition (agents' doxic adhesion to the world) and therefore fails to adequately account for the oppositional dispositions and discourses that are so manifestly evident to scholars engaged with subordinated populations. Like Bourdieu, the variegated feminist and critical race and legal scholarship on oppressed groups, on which this article draws, focuses on the socializing effects of subordination. Yet, unlike Bourdieu, this scholarship emphasizes how the day-to-day negotiation of subordination can—and often does—produce oppositional discourses contesting the legitimacy of dominant arrangements. In my view, this scholarship on the rhetorical dimension of subordination supplements and enriches Bourdieu's conceptual apparatus, most importantly extending it to attend to the conditions under which and the ways in which subordinates become aware “of how they are socially positioned and of the attempts to represent them” (Skeggs 1997, p. 4).⁷ This work also shows how subordinates respond by expressing—in comments, narratives, and stories—their opposition to the prevailing definition of the situation within institutional and public arenas (Lovell 2000; McCall 1992).

At the same time, as demonstrated by Bourdieu-inspired feminist scholars (McNay 1999; Lawler 2004), Bourdieu's conceptual apparatus remains a key framework for paying attention to the constraints that subordinates face in developing a redefinition of their predicament, which escapes the terms of reference imposed from above and effects social change (on the limits of “cultures of resistance” see, e.g., Bourgois 1996; Willis 1977). Further, as I demonstrate in this article, Bourdieu's theory of *habitus* helps historicize and trace the dispositional roots of oppositional discourses among subordinates: “It is only in relation to certain structures that *habitus* produces discourses or practices” (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). This attention to the connection between discursive practices and the process of acquisition of dispositions under specific structural conditions is particularly useful for studying perceptions of injustice—and resistance to it—among subordinates who are differently situated in relation to powerful institutions and to their constrictive material and discursive practices.

The next section develops this engagement with Bourdieu's theory of *habitus* and feminist and critical race and legal scholarship on “subjugated knowledge.” Specifically, I argue that their theoretical integration is useful for approaching people's discursive practices, including their explicit explanations of key issues in their lives, as embodied practices rather than disembodied representations. Furthermore, I argue that the production, distribution, and effects of these practices—including their emancipatory potential—cannot be detached from the broader process of practical socialization that they experience. After a methodological note on my fieldwork within and across the West Bank and Lod, I outline the material and symbolic conditions of subordination against which Lod Palestinians negotiate their lives and acquire their dispositions to resist the state. I also explore how these dispositions work in Lod Palestinians' discursive expression of their sense of injustice. Then I turn to the case of the West Bank Palestinians who live in Lod, discussing how, unlike the political rhetoric used by their co-nationals, they mainly express moral concerns about everyday communication, lifestyle, and relationships in the city. I trace this emphasis on

⁷ This point is particularly important for the case of the Palestinians in Lod who express their sense of injustice by referring to and contesting the moralizing and criminalizing discourses about Palestinian citizens of Israel that circulate in the dominant policy and public arenas.

morality to their disposition to invest into social-moral cohesion as a component of their political resistance against the Israeli army in the West Bank. The conclusion calls for attention to the role of dispositions in studies of identity-formation and boundary-work as well as issues of submission and resistance. It also calls for more research on the resilience and possible renegotiation of dispositional formations in contexts of subordination.

Subordination, dispositions, and perceptions: a theoretical framework

In his “Let’s Get Free: An Hip-Hop Theory of Justice,” U.S. legal scholar and ex-prosecutor Paul Butler (2009, pp. 123-145) argues that the African American urban poor have produced a wealth of knowledge about issues of crime and punishment out of their encounters with law enforcement officials, especially their experiences of drug-related incarceration. He also argues that this knowledge, which can be found in thousands of hip-hop songs, amounts to “a theory of justice,” which “evaluates criminal justice from the bottom up,” for example seeing incarceration as an attack on communal ties.⁸ In Bourdieusian terms, Paul Butler’s bottom-up “theory of justice” highlights how beliefs and perceptions among subordinates are “practical” forms of knowledge, which have emerged in dialogue with distinct histories and structures of subordination (Bourdieu 2000, pp. 184-185). It also raises the question of how and the extent to which these practical orientations from below, for example, the interpretation of the law among African Americans as a form of “aggression” (P. Davis 1989), can challenge the “genesis amnesia” through which dominant institutions mask their historical arbitrariness (Bourdieu 2000, p. 94).⁹

While critical race and legal works on perceptions about the law among African Americans focus on the latter question—the emancipatory potential of these perceptions to make visible and thus possible to challenge the racial logic of legal institutions in the US—(see, e.g., Delgado 1989; Matsuda 1989; Wagner-Pacifi 1994), this article delves into the dispositional production of everyday perceptions of injustice; an issue that, in my view, needs to be addressed in order to fully grasp both the limits and potential of acts of appropriation and subversion from below.

This article explores the link between two relations: “the relation of conditioning” through which “the field structures the habitus” and the “relation of knowledge or *cognitive construction*” through which people give meaning and act in the world around them (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, p. 127 emphasis in original). Specifically, with a focus on everyday life in contexts of subordination, I connect the interpretive frameworks that people use to make sense of and

⁸ “Hip-hop culture emphasizes the role of environment in determining conduct... [It] discounts responsibility when criminal conduct has been shaped by a substandard environment... [It] does not deny that the underprivileged are moral agents; it does, however, require us to consider thoughtfully how free some people’s choices really are... [It] advocates retribution, but not at all costs. If the consequence of making people pay for their crimes is the decimation of a community, then retribution is less important” (P. Butler 2009, pp. 136-137)

⁹ Both Bourdieu and Paul Butler refer to John Rawls’ *Theory of Justice* in their respective discussions of the law. Bourdieu (2000, p. 94) uses Rawls’ book as an example of his account of how the law is an institution that hides its historical roots. Butler (2009, pp. 136-137) argues that poor African Americans “come closest to Rawls’ ideal lawmakers” given that they “are both the most likely to be arrested and incarcerated for crimes *and* the most likely to be victims of crimes.”

represent their predicaments and the cognitive, affective, and social dispositions that they have acquired mostly imperceptibly in their being embedded in a specific situation. I argue that this connection between dispositions and perceptions is a necessary step for understanding how and why certain perceptions of injustice—what social movement scholars call “injustice frames” (Benford and Snow 2000, pp. 615-616; Gamson 1992, pp. 31-58; 1995)—develop among and resonate with some segments of a subordinated population but not others. This also means that the discursive practices that subordinates direct against dominant arrangements—what James Scott (1990) calls “hidden transcripts”—are “always situated interpretations of historical and political experiences” (Mitchell 1990, pp. 555-556).¹⁰

Bourdieu’s concept of *habitus* is particularly helpful in this regard. According to Bourdieu, “as an acquired system of generative schemes, the habitus makes possible the free production of all the thoughts, perceptions, and actions inherent in the particular conditions of its production” (Bourdieu 1990, p. 55). In this sense, people “are not *subjects* faced with an object (or, even less, a problem) that will be constituted as such by an intellectual act of cognition” but “social agents...who have embodied a host of practical schemes of perception and appreciation functioning as instruments of reality construction, as principles of vision and division of the universe in which they act” (Bourdieu 1998, p. 80 emphasis in original). Thus, on the one hand, focusing on the formation of *habitus* allows us to analyze “the social agent as a physical, *embodied* actor, subject to developmental, cognitive, and emotive constraints and affected by the very real physical and institutional configurations of the field” (Lizardo 2009, p. 5 emphasis in original). On the other, it allows us to explore the “generative” role of *habitus* in the production of knowledge, whether we focus on the expression of beliefs or feelings, the articulation of explanations, the telling of stories, or the adjustment of bodily postures (Bourdieu 1990, pp. 72-74; 2000, pp. 184-185).

A similar attention to how perceptions among subordinates are situated structurally and historically informs feminist inquiries on the production of classed, gendered, and racialized sensitivities (Collins 1991; Skeggs 1997; Walkerdine et al. 2001). Take Patricia Hill Collins’ (1991) extensive use of commentaries by ordinary African American women to show how these women have become “situated knowers” of oppression even if their knowledge remains “subjugated,” that is, silenced or vilified. By arguing, for example, that urban ghettoization “fostered the solidification of a *distinctive ethos* in Black civil society regarding language, religion, family structure, community politics,” Collins’ analytic perspective comes close to Bourdieu’s argument about how people acquire and transmit practical schemes of perception and appreciation within specific contexts. There is a similar convergence in terms of giving importance to everyday life and, at the same time, anchoring it to macro-level structures. Collins explores “experience as a criterion of meanings” not in terms of abstract “subjects” facing and organizing external sensorial stimuli but in terms of concrete agents being socialized in specific situations (pp. 275-279). Similarly,

¹⁰ The point I want to emphasize here is that what people say about their predicament partakes to a broader process of acquisition and transmission of practices, including non-verbal practices. This point is supported by Burkitt’s (1998) theoretical integration of Bourdieu’s theory of *habitus* and Bakhtin’s theory of language, Sloop’s and Ono’s (1997, p. 60) “rhetoric as a practice” approach, and Hanks’ (2005) work on the dialogue between Bourdieu’s practice theory and linguistic anthropology.

Bourdieu understands experience “in relational terms,” as a link between macro-structural forces and “the interpretive and cognitive capacities displayed by social actors,” and as a terrain on which both the “somatization of power relations” and “the practical activity of the agent” occur (McNay 2003, p. 144; 2004, p. 175, 183).¹¹ This convergence extends to the importance given to historical factors: Bourdieu’s (1990, p. 56) definition of *habitus* as “embodied history” resonates with Collins’ attention to how sedimented histories of subordination are active in shaping the experiences of African Americans.¹²

Similar to attempts to supplement Bourdieu’s conceptual apparatus with phenomenological tools (see, e.g., Atkinson 2010; Crossley 2001), feminist engagements with Bourdieu emphasize the need for a stronger theorization of conscious appraisal and intersubjectivity (J. Butler 1997, pp. 141-164; McCall 1992; Skeggs 2004). While this article recognizes the importance of these theoretical supplements, its focus is on the practical inculcation of sensitivities and perceptions through everyday activities and involving the whole person. As Bourdieu-inspired feminist scholar Lawler (2004, p. 111) puts it, the concept of *habitus* “cuts across conventional mind/body splits” and “across conventional distinctions between conscious and unconscious” in order to capture how “‘large scale’ social inequalities... are also made to inhere within the person.” “Cutting across mind/body splits” is also a key movement in feminist works on the formation of subjectivities (e.g., Walkerdine et al. 2001, p. 15).

These efforts to problematize the distinction between perception, action, and representation (see, also, Bourdieu 1996, pp. 313-321) are particularly useful in exploring what Holland and Leander (2004, p. 137) call “hybrid social/cultural/psychological forms” in contexts of subordination. Thus, for example, the categories of perception undergirding the above-mentioned “theory of justice” in the American Black ghetto cannot be understood without paying attention to the experience of incarceration shared by many African American families. The analytical usefulness of Bourdieu’s theory of *habitus* for studying the link between structures and experiences of subordination has been demonstrated by Charlesworth’s (1999) study of the experience of growing up working-class in England; by Wacquant’s (1995, 2004; 2011, p. 88) “carnal ethnography” of becoming a boxer in a Chicago gym and his argument about the connection between the practices of boxers and the logic of class and racial subordination in America (2008); and by Auyero’s (1999) ethnography of how poor people understand clientelism in Argentina.

Before moving to the empirical sections, one qualification is warranted. A focus on age, gender, place of origin, and other axes of differentiation would supplement this analysis of the interpretive divergence between West Bank and

¹¹ I agree with McNay (2004, p. 178) that, in this way, the concept of experience is rescued from a tendency towards an empiricism “which does not scrutinize the conditions that determine how experience relates to knowledge” and towards a reinforcement of the opposition between objectivity and subjectivity. Joan Scott (1991) finds this tendency in feminist standpoint theories. While Collins is associated with feminist standpoint, my reading of her work highlights her attention to structural and historical factors in the production of perceptions, including non-feminist ideas, among different segments of African American women. In this sense, Collins’ work resonates with Joan Scott’s argument about how subjectivities and experiences are socially constructed.

¹² The importance of structures and histories of subordination in the production of knowledge also emerges from Foucault’s (1980) use of the concept of “subjugated knowledge” to address the production of “low-ranking knowledges...disqualified knowledges” such as that “of the psychiatric patient, of the ill person... that of the delinquent.”

Lod Palestinians. For example, a focus on age would specify the vocabularies used by different generations of Palestinians living in Lod to make sense of their everyday predicaments (see, e.g., Kassem 2010, pp. 105-107; 2011, pp. 151-152 on elderly Palestinian women in Lod). Given their various experiences of displacement, place of origin is another factor that is likely to further differentiate everyday perceptions among Palestinians. For example, many of the West Bank Palestinians I met in Lod were born in refugee camps. While here I highlight the convergence between their perceptions and those of other West Bank Palestinians in relation to their shared experience of military rule in the West Bank, more research is needed on the salience of the urban-rural-refugee divide in the lives of West Bank Palestinians living in Lod. An attention to various axes of differentiation can enrich and further specify this analysis of two sets of practical orientations towards injustice, politics, and morality.¹³

Ethnography across the Green Line¹⁴

The data used in this article were produced through ethnographic fieldwork that I conducted in West Bank villages and refugee camps as well as inside Israel in the spring of 2002, the summers of 2003, 2004 and 2005, as well as for fourteen months in 2007-2008. While the ethnographic data collected during the six months of fieldwork in the Arab districts of Lod helped me understand the practical knowledge accompanying the experience of growing up Palestinian in Lod as well the differing perceptions expressed by West Bank Palestinians living in the city, the fieldwork conducted in the West Bank was a key component for understanding the conditions of life that the West Bank Palestinians who moved to Lod as adults had negotiated growing up in the West Bank.

Ethnography is a methodology that has a strong affinity with Bourdieu's theory of *habitus* (Wacquant 2009, pp. 114-115). It is a particularly promising way to explore "the interplay between individual bodily and mental structures and macrolevel social structures" (Lizardo 2004, pp. 394-395) and to study how perceptions are embedded "within the practical context of people's ongoing engagement with their environments in the ordinary course of life" (Ingold 2000, p. 167). While Geertz (1993 [1983], pp. 153-155) calls for an "ethnography of thinking," which conceptualizes "thinking" as "a matter of trafficking in the symbolic forms available in one or another community," a Bourdieusian perspective pushes ethnographers to situate and historicize the movements and contents of these symbolic forms by studying their production in connection to the

¹³ I follow Wacquant (1995, p. 490, 526, note n. 14) in his argument that, while there is a tension between focusing on "the invariants" of a certain "viewpoint" and analyzing possible "variations" within it, "an elucidation of" these variations "presupposes a prior understanding of "what these experiential paths hold in common."

¹⁴ The Green Line is the armistice line that, in 1948, divided the newly formed Israeli state from the Jordan-controlled West Bank and the Egypt-controlled Gaza Strip. In 1967 the Israeli state occupied the West Bank and the Gaza Strip but did not extend citizenship to Palestinians living there. Thus, since 1967, the Green Line has marked the divide between Palestinians with (limited) citizenship rights and stateless Palestinians under military rule.

relationship between objective structures and embodied dispositions (Wacquant, 1995, p. 491).

Bourdieu's (1977, p. 88) emphasis on how people acquire practical knowledge through a day-to-day process of "apprenticeship through simple familiarization" finds its methodological counterpart in Wacquant's (2005, 2009, 2011, 2013) dissection of the process of "apprenticeship" by which, through cumulative experiences in the field, an ethnographer becomes socialized at least to a certain degree into the practical knowledge of the reality that he or she studies. This process of "apprenticeship" is particularly intense when the researcher explicitly and systematically uses his or her body "as a vector of knowledge of the social world" (Wacquant 2011, p. 88); for example, acquiring specialized layers of dispositions such as those of boxers (Wacquant 2004), wildland firefighters (Desmond 2007), and runway models (Mears 2011). While "apprenticeship" might be less methodical when conducting fieldwork outside combat sports or explicitly body-oriented professions, at the level of methodology, it still works as a powerful reminder that "meaning-making is not a mental affair liable to an intellectualist reading." Indeed, through the combination of "practical entanglement" with systematic reflexivity at each stage of the research, including the selection of sites, the ties developed in the field, and the practical knowledge acquired, scholars can "deepen objectivity" (Wacquant 2005, pp. 466-467; 2009, pp. 121-122) or, using the terminology of some feminist scholars, reach a "strong objectivity" (Haraway 1991, pp. 183-190; Harding 1993). This attention to the embodied dimension of ethnography is particularly important for grasping how the experience of surviving in a hostile environment structures primary dispositions, producing sets of practical skills, propensities, and sensibilities that are particularly durable.

Fieldwork in the West Bank included routine participation in everyday activities in spaces in which the military power of the Israeli state becomes most visible: the checkpoints, military towers, roadblocks, and walls disseminated throughout the West Bank. Over the years, I re-learned rules of movement, points of access, and available routes by observing, following, and asking for help from Palestinians around me. The eight months that I spent in a West Bank refugee camp intensified my exposure to the interventions of the Israeli army in everyday life. For example military jeeps routinely entered the camp in the night to conduct arrests. In the morning, I joined camp dwellers in assessing damage and visiting the families of those who had been arrested. In addition to the Israeli army, the West Bank "field" is saturated with humanitarian and international actors. For example, in the camp where I conducted fieldwork, I joined dwellers in their encounters with a broader range of international and local humanitarian actors, including UNRWA personnel,¹⁵ the staff of NGOs, foreign volunteers and English teachers. Embedded in this fieldwork, I conducted 10 semi-structured interviews with West Bank villagers in the summers of 2004 and 2005 and 33 with dwellers of the refugee camp in 2007-2008.

If fieldwork in the West Bank took a marked collective dimension—for example, experiences of collective punishment and recurrent demonstrations—participant observation in the Arab districts of Lod was an intense learning experience in how to stay alert and avoid the gaze of the law-enforcement agencies. This does not mean that I did not participate in meetings or observe the

¹⁵ UNRWA is the United Nations Relief and Welfare Agency for Palestinian refugees established by the United Nations in 1949.

workings of NGOs involving Palestinian residents of the city. For example, I joined some local activists in their meetings and discussed with them their civil society development activities. Yet, in contrast to a practical sense oriented towards, investing in, and requiring support from, other group members to engage outsiders (whether hostile as Israeli soldiers or sympathetic as foreign volunteers), in Lod I gradually came to internalize the heightened sense of being scrutinized and surveilled. In their everyday communication, residents often referred to stories or dilemmas related to what they call their “Shabak education”—*Shabak* is the Hebrew acronym for General Security Services (GSS), the main Israeli security agency—ranging from their anxiety about the presence of police informers among their friends and neighbors, to their understanding that exchanging information with the police is a way to access basic resources such as a building license. My fieldwork in the city was punctuated by warnings from Palestinian residents about whom (not) to speak to and what to say to whom. Accompanying residents in their everyday errands sensitized me to their desire to avoid contact with police officers and their uneasiness about the construction of a police station in the heart of a new small housing project inside one of their districts. It also sensitized me to residents’ keen awareness of being represented as dangerous and unworthy people within dominant policy and public arenas. For example, residents often made comments about what they had heard or read in the news, pointing to the derogatory ways in which Palestinian residents in the city were portrayed. Several middle-aged residents with a history of dealing and using drugs familiarized me with the main folk explanations and stories about the presence of drugs in the district. I also had informal dialogues with young residents involved in drug dealing. I supplemented this participant observation with 25 semi-structured interviews with residents in their twenties, thirties, forties, and fifties.

In Lod, I met dozens of West Bank Palestinians who lived there as a result of marriage or in search of work. I mainly formed stable ties with West Bank women who were married to local residents but I also spoke with West Bank men, either married to Israeli Palestinian women or working in and around the city. Most of them were in their twenties, thirties, and forties. They were all in precarious legal situations, ranging from expired or short-term residency permits for those married to local residents, to undocumented status for workers. I also conducted eight semi-structured interviews with West Bank women, all of whom I had met with regularly in the preceding months.

Growing up Palestinian in Lod

Denigration, criminalization, and surveillance

Roscigno (2011, p. 362) calls “symbolic vilification” “the process wherein less powerful actors are discursively deemed as less worthy, problematic or in some regard dangerous.” In the case of those Palestinians who managed to remain inside and obtain citizenship from the newly formed Israeli state (Leibler and Breslau 2005), their “vilification” is tied to their ethnonational identity, which Israeli authorities perceive as a threat in demographic, symbolic, and security-political terms. While the Israeli citizenship regime includes some liberal components that are inclusive of Arab citizens, for example the right to vote, its ethnonational components, which establish a hierarchy of rights and legitimacy

among citizens according to their ethnonational identity, have consistently prevailed on the liberal components (Ghanem et al. 1998; Jamal 2007a; Shafir and Peled 2002). Indeed, the Israeli state has historically constructed and related to its Palestinian Arab citizens as “a dangerous population,” the goal being “neither to liquidate it nor to integrate it...but to control it and render it manageable and transparent to state power” (Kemp 2004, p. 80). Another goal has been to “educate” Israeli Palestinians about the limits of the legitimate political discourse and to punish political activists (Cohen 2010, p. 235). The mechanisms of controlling political activities among Israeli Palestinians were put in place in the period from 1948 to 1966, during which military governors were responsible for issuing travel permits for everyday activities such as visiting a relative, for recruiting informers whose task was to collect information about their fellow Palestinians, and for punishing nationalist individuals and movements among them (Cohen 2010; Dallasheh 2010; Korn 2000a, 2000b; Lustick 1980; Sa'di 2003). While military rule was abolished in 1966, Israeli authorities have continued to treat Palestinians as a “dangerous” population using various surveillance methods including the “traditional” recruitment of informers and the use of new technological devices (Zureik 2011). Surveillance mechanisms have been supplemented with the differential treatment of Palestinian citizens according to an official taxonomy, which divides them into four ethnoreligious categories—Muslims, Christians, Bedouins, and Druze. These ethnoreligious categories are then made salient through, among other things, the state’s regime of military recruitment (Enloe 1980). Thus, unlike other Israeli Palestinians, Druze have been included in the compulsory conscription (Firro 2001) while Bedouins have been allowed to volunteer in “ethnic units” of the army, often as “trackers” in the southern desert areas (Kanaaneh 2009, pp. 12-13, 52-53).

The protracted incorporation of Israeli Palestinians as a denigrated and surveilled population that is excluded from and is considered a threat to the legitimate ethnonational core of the state translates into material discrimination and symbolic devaluation in many realms of life including employment, housing, land tenure, urban planning, and education (for instance, Lewin-Epstein and Semyonov 2011; Yiftachel 2006). For example, most Israeli Palestinians are excluded from the many jobs that require military experience, ranging from jobs in the public administration to those in high-tech companies (Ibrahim 2010, p. 211). More broadly, serving in the army is a key determinant in the distribution of resources and opportunities among the Israeli citizenry, for example, privileged access to leased residential land and favorable home loans (Kanaaneh 2009, pp. 41-43). Thus, only Druze and Bedouin soldiers have access to all the material benefits that serving in the army grants to Jewish citizens while, at the same time, like other Palestinian citizens, they experience the negative impact of other “ethnocratic” state policies discriminating between Jewish and Arab citizens. Evidence of stunted upward mobility is the fact that, while constituting 20 per cent of the Israeli population, “Arabs are virtually excluded from Israel’s scientific or business elites comprising less than one per cent of university professorship, or membership to boards of directors” (Yiftachel 2011, p. 131). Arab households are overrepresented among the poor with their average family income only 57 per cent of that of Jewish Israeli families (Shehadeh 2012, p. 183).

Denigration, criminalization, and surveillance are particularly intense in Lod, where law-enforcement and security agencies have effectively produced an emotional climate of fear and distrust among Palestinian residents (Pasquetti

2013). After the mass expulsion in 1948, only 1,050 Palestinians out of 18,050 were left in the city (Kassem 2010, p. 94), a number that only slightly increased during the 1950s and the 1960s, when the Israeli state was engaged in the process of the repopulation of Lod with Jewish citizens (Golan 2003). However, since the 1970s, the Palestinian population of Lod has steadily grown to reach 16,800 individuals (about 25 percent of the town's total population) in 2008 (Yacobi 2009). The recomposition of an increasingly sizeable Palestinian population in the city is due to pull factors such as the proximity of Tel Aviv's low-wage market as well as push factors such as the state-sponsored removal of Bedouin families from the Negev, some of which moved to Lod.¹⁶ This recomposition has been marked by state practices and discourses that have had the cumulative effect of "illegalizing"¹⁷ Palestinian lives, especially in the realm of land and housing tenure. For example, some of the city's Arab districts such the Rakevet-Mahatta (Railway Station) area, remain "unrecognized" by the state and thus under-serviced and subjected to demolition because they stand on land that is zoned as state-owned land. In other districts, such as in the adjacent Pardes-Shanir area, Palestinian families privately own their land but the houses that they have built on it are also at risk of demolition because the state has zoned their land as agricultural and not residential land. Further, Palestinian residents struggle to obtain building licenses from the Israeli authorities and thus often build without them. The Israeli authorities recognize the housing shortage in the Arab districts of the city. For example, a report written by the Israeli Parliament's Interior and Environment Committee drawing on information provided by the Lod municipality calculates that "there is a lack of 1,600 housing units for the Arab population, and that by 2020, considering the natural increase of the [Arab] population, there will be a shortage of 4,500 housing units."¹⁸ Yet, the committee recommended the enforcement of house demolitions in the Arab districts and the construction of new residential areas for "strong populations," for example "the Zionist religious people [who] come to the city for idealist reasons."

In addition to manifesting demographic anxieties, official discourses frame the presence of Palestinians in the city as a source of criminality that can be kept in check only through the combined interventions of security and law-enforcement agencies. Thus, for example, in September and October 2010, the Minister of public security released a series of announcements about the increased securitization of the city including measures such as the following:

We shall carry out a siege on the criminals of Lod... *Magav*¹⁹ and a special political patrol unit will enter the city... We will use *mista'arvim* [Israeli soldiers disguised as Arabs, in Hebrew]²⁰ and *Yamam* forces [counter-terrorism elite unit of the Israeli army].²¹

¹⁶ Many Bedouin villages in the Negev, a southern desert area inside Israel, remain "unrecognized" by the state, which denies them services and routinely carries out evictions and demolitions. Bedouins are also pressured to move into new towns explicitly built for them by the state (Abu-Saad 2008).

¹⁷ I support Heyman's (2013, p. 304) call for conceptualizing "legalization and illegalization as processes (in particular as social-political projects), rather than as states of being" and for focusing on the role of the state in the production of "legalized and illegalized practices" (see, also, Heyman and Smart 1999).

¹⁸ Copy of the original report in Hebrew is available from the author.

¹⁹ *Magav* is the Hebrew acronym for the Israeli border police.

²⁰ A note on transliteration of words in Arabic and Hebrew: for the Arabic, I used a simplified version of the system of the *International Journal of Middle East Studies*. I omitted all diacritical marks, including those for long vowels, except for the ayn ('). For the Hebrew I used the standard

Only against the backdrop of this hostile material and discursive environment can we understand how Palestinian urban minorities have come to share a distinct sense of injustice and support a political rhetoric that denies the legitimacy of law-enforcement agencies and that justifies resistance to the law as both a form of survival and a form of political protest.

Lod Palestinians' sense of injustice and political rhetoric

Palestinian citizens of Israel are aware of their symbolic-cum-material marginalization. They have contested their predicament of subordination in various ways including demonstrations, social movements, court-based activism, and party politics (Jamal 2007b, 2008; Rabinowitz and Abu Baker 2005). Their sense of injustice has been intensified by the police repression of their mass protests in solidarity with fellow Palestinians in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip at the beginning of the Second *Intifada* (Uprising) in October 2000, which resulted in the death of thirteen protesters. Further, everyday attempts to cope with marginalization, which do not fall within the realm of open political mobilization, are also imbued with a political rhetoric that identifies the state as the main responsible institution for Palestinian citizens' marginalized status. This is surely the case of the "injustice frame" through which Palestinians in Lod contest the legitimacy of the law and resist law-enforcement practices.

Brisbin (2010, p. 27) connects resistance to the law to "new truths derived from subjugated ideas about rights, justice, and social identities such as gender or race." He argues that "resistance to law requires a consciousness of how legality denies or excludes recognition of an individuals' desires, is arbitrarily applied, or establishes unjust distributions of power, wealth, or status." Brisbin also addresses the relationship between resistance to the law and crime, drawing attention to how "subjugated" theories of justice can legitimize criminal law violations as legitimate attempts to secure access to unjustly denied resources. These insights into the link between resistance to the law, including criminal law, and "subjugated ideas" about justice are useful for exploring Lod Palestinians' oppositional dispositions as we can see them working in their everyday interpretations.

Lod Palestinians have developed an interpretive framework that, on the one hand, identifies structural-political reasons for issues that impact their lives such as drugs and poor education and, on the other hand, attributes a sense of value to day-to-day improvement of living conditions outside the gaze of the state and its constraining legality. These two dimensions of their "practical knowledge" are intertwined with one and another as well as with their "practical awareness" about stigmatizing public and official discourses about their presence in the city. While this entanglement is evident from the materials analyzed below, for analytic purposes I first focus on Lod Palestinians' sense of injustice directed against the state and I then move on to the sense of value they attach to improvements to their living conditions, including those achieved by them or other fellow-Palestinian outside the law.

format and at the same time marked the ayn ('). Transliterated words are all in Arabic except when they are marked as words in Hebrew.

²¹ These announcements were posted on the website of Lod's municipality. Copies translated in English are available from the author.

Palestinian residents express their sense of injustice by signaling their awareness about and rejection of negative representations imposed on them. In the words of a young Palestinian woman who was born in Lod:

They [the authorities and the media] don't want to say good things about us...They usually mention the term Arab next to the name of a person who did something wrong.

Similarly, a Palestinian resident in his forties worried about the future with these words:

People know that there is no future here. My son finished the 12th grade and can barely find a job. When they hear his name they refuse to give him a job.

Signs of drugs dot the landscape of the city's Arab districts, from drug addicts to police checkpoints. Thus, while most Palestinian residents are not involved in the illegal economy, they are routinely exposed to the presence of drugs—especially drug addiction—and often refer to it when they speak about the detrimental role of the state and especially its law-enforcement agencies in their lives. For example, Salha,²² a young Palestinian woman who was born in the Rakevet-Mahatta district, a segregated, “unrecognized,” and under-serviced district of the city, explains when and why the police intervened against drug dealing in her district:

For years they [the Israeli authorities] let the Arabs fight and kill one another in the Mahatta [Salha's district] because of the ‘poisons’ (*sumum*) [drugs],²³ but then they started noticing that those who came to buy the drugs were not only Arabs but also Jews...then the drugs in the Mahatta became a problem to solve.

Along similar lines, Mahmud, a middle-aged resident of the same district, once pointed to a friend of his who was walking on the other side of the sidewalk and told me:

They [Israeli officials] want him to stay a drug addict. They don't want him to become a clean human being...the police used to forbid Jews from entering the district when people started selling drugs here...they used to get mad when they would see the soldiers here. They were afraid that the soldiers might sell their guns [in exchange for drugs].

Salha's and Mahmud's interpretations are shared by many residents of their district, who emphasize how the presence of hundreds of Jewish Israeli addicts alarmed the police, which reacted by setting up checkpoints at the entrance of the district and closing down the system of “ATMs” (little holes in walls through

²² All names of people are fictitious.

²³ Three terms were commonly used to refer to drugs: *sumum* (poisons in Arabic), *mukhaddirat* (drugs in Arabic), and *samim* (drugs in Hebrew).

which drug addicts insert money and an anonymous hand passes through the fix in return) that existed inside the district.

This emphasis on the differential treatment of Jewish and Arab drug addicts is often accompanied by the understanding that drug consumption among Arab residents is a form of suffering largely due to the state's refusal to recognize their historical narrative and ethnonational identity. A poignant example of this is a short comment through which a Palestinian resident in his early thirties condensed his view on drugs: "We had an history, now we have cocaine." Drug consumption is also perceived as a tool of state control over Palestinian lives. For example, once I was accompanying a Palestinian resident on her errands and when she saw a man walking unsteadily visibly under the influence of some substance asking for money from drivers at a traffic light near downtown Lod, she told me that the man was someone who lived in her district, and then commented: "the police squeeze them [drug addicts] as an orange and then they discard them."

Palestinian residents' understanding of other issues impacting their lives such as poor educational achievements is also centered on state discrimination. For example, references to the police and other penal institutions such as the prison also pepper Arab residents' discussions and comments about the poor quality of educational facilities in the Arab schools. During my fieldwork, I joined local parents' associations in their efforts for increased public funding for Arab schools and teacher training. Parents participating in these initiatives often remarked negatively on the quality of education for Lod's Arab students emphasizing how they underachieve because of state discrimination and how they are much more likely to enter the prison than the university:

Students here are poor. None of Al-Lod's high school students manage to enter a university in Israel or abroad...every year, 4 or 5 students go to prison but no one goes to the university.

The structural-political interpretive framework, which informs Arab residents' sense of injustice, also finds expression in their attachment of a sense of value to the improvement of living conditions outside and against the state. Take the case of drug dealing. While only a minority of residents are directly involved in the illegal economy for protracted periods of time, many of them speak about drug dealing as one of the few tools available to Palestinians in Lod to attempt to escape the material deprivation and symbolic negation imposed by the state. While residents are concerned about the negative repercussions of drug dealing in terms of drug-related violence and drug addiction inside their districts, their comments on the illegal economy often frame drug dealing as an (admittedly imperfect) alternative to the other methods of accessing resources, which involve contact with the state's security apparatus such as exchanging information with the police or, for the Bedouin youth, serving in the army. This opposition between the illegal economy and police-mediated ways to access resources emerges when Jamal, a resident in his early fifties with a long criminal record, explained to me how, when he was in his mid-twenties, he had attempted to stop dealing drugs. He had informally run a food stand for a couple of months before receiving police visits "every two days to ask about the food stand and a permit." After failing to obtain a license from the municipality he had continued to operate the stand until he was arrested and imprisoned for six months. Jamal was convinced that the only way for him to obtain a license for his stand would have been to become an informer for the police. He repeatedly emphasized that most residents—"people

like me”—face the dilemma of obtaining a shop or building license in the face of a state’s security apparatus that pressures them to inform on other residents. In this context, while the illegal economy is objectively not immune from state penetration, it has nevertheless become imbued with meanings of political opposition to the state. This is also true in the case of serving in the army, the main route for Bedouin youth to secure a basic income (Kanaaneh 2009, p. 39). For example, a Bedouin woman in her early twenties responded to a question about the presence of drugs in her district defensively switching the focus on how, like most Bedouins who had moved to Lod, her family members and neighbors did not serve in the army. Another woman who was born in a district where many Bedouin families arrived in the 1970s and 1980s approvingly commented that her new neighbors did not volunteer in the army while she downplayed the negative repercussions of their renowned involvement in the illegal economy.

The political meanings attached to the illegal economy also become manifest in the sense of empowerment that Palestinian residents express when describing successful attempts to reach higher standards of living, including those pursued through participation in the illegal economy. Residents are alert about the circulation of external representations that reduce Palestinians to petty criminals. As a result, when speaking about the illegal economy, they often assume a defensive stance refocusing the conversation on state discrimination and its negative effects on their socioeconomic mobility. At the same time, during my fieldwork, especially after a couple of months of daily communication, I documented how some residents expressed their admiration about the beautiful two-story houses that, according to them, had been built in different parts of Lod with “drug money.” For instance, once as I was walking in front of one of these houses, I observed two fully masked men sitting on the balcony ledge with their legs dangling off the edge. The young Palestinian woman who was accompanying me downplayed the likely involvement of the two men in drug dealing with a joke commenting that those men had their faces covered because they were “very religious” and then shifted focus on the house asking me if I liked the balcony’s decorative motifs. She also commented that she appreciated that the house had been built following “the architecture of the Arabic house.” Another time I joined a group of residents to visit another house, which featured a courtyard and a very spacious reception room that could sit at least twenty people. After the visit, a young Palestinian in his mid-twenties commented that the property owners “had done something with their lives.”

The widespread perception that, rather than delivering personal safety, the police work to undermine the lives of Palestinians in the city reinforces the sense of value that many residents attach to improved material conditions regardless of the means used. This is evident in how Salha, the above-mentioned young woman, complemented her comment about the authorities’ preoccupation with drug addiction among Jewish but not Arab citizens by voicing her understanding that the improvement of material conditions via drug dealing among Arab residents is a target of the police’s operations in the district:

They [the Israeli police] saw that the Arabs were making good money, some of them [Arabs] had bought a shop or built a big house and they were surprised, they didn’t like it.

Samer, a man in his mid-thirties, expressed his view on the police and the illegal economy with very similar words:

They [Israeli authorities] want to keep drugs in the Mahatta. Not because they want Arabs to sell it but to become addicts. But they saw that not all Arabs become addicts but some of them do and others started to buy buildings, cars, and shops.

Palestinians in Lod have come to share a structural-political interpretive framework as a result of their experience of subordination in the city. This framework subverts the negative value judgments imposed by the dominant Jewish Israeli society while attaching a sense of value to day-to-day attempts to obtain access to scarce resources.²⁴ It links key issues impacting Lod Palestinians' lives such as drug addiction and school dropouts to their protracted experience of being "unwanted," denigrated and policed within the city and the state. This structural-political interpretation usually prevails over or at least tempers individual or moral interpretations of the same behaviors. Thus, for example, elderly Palestinian women living in Lod refer to the importance of family upbringing when they speak about drug addiction, but they also use the phrase "the days of Israel" to connect issues of drugs, violence, and poor education among Palestinians in the city to their experience of being controlled by the Israeli state. They also remember the pre-1948 period, which they call "the days of the Arabs" or "the days of Palestine," as a time of less self-destructive and violent behaviors (Kassem 2010: 105-107; 2011: 151-152). While this paper focuses on the overall sense of injustice undergirding this structural-political framework, more research is needed on the role of age, gender, class, and other factors in determining how urban Palestinians relate to issues of moral-individual responsibility while they direct their sense of injustice against the state.

This qualification is particularly important in terms of the material-symbolic role of the illegal economy in the city's segregated and under-served districts. My findings show that in these districts the structural-political framework extends to the illegal economy, which is often defensively discussed in connection to the experience of being denied resources and rights and at times actively considered as an act of subversion against an unjust legal-political order. Yet, given the detrimental impact of the illegal economy on family and communal lives, this interpretation is contested both from within and outside the districts where I conducted fieldwork. For example, as I will discuss in the conclusion, some hip-hop musicians who were born in Lod's segregated districts frame participation in the illegal economy as a practice that reinforces rather than challenges the denigrated condition of Palestinians inside the city. At the same time, groups of middle-class Palestinian activists often living outside the segregated districts have mobilized to help poor Palestinians channel their sense of injustice toward legal and collective forms of protest against state discriminatory practices, especially in housing and law enforcement.

West Bank Palestinians in Lod

Most West Bank Palestinians living in Lod are under the risk of deportation. Their precarious legal status is due to the increasingly strict restrictions that the Israeli state has introduced on West Bank and Gaza workers since the early 1990s

²⁴ For two Bourdieu-inspired works on how subordinates reverse the negative value judgments imposed on them see Skeggs and Loveday (2012) and Todd (2005).

(Farsakh 2005) and on West Bank and Gaza spouses of Israeli citizens since the early 2000s (Masri 2013).²⁵ The current trajectory towards the “illegalization” of the presence of West Bank Palestinians inside Israel and of their familial ties with Israeli Palestinians reverses the relative porosity of the Green Line, which had characterized the two decades following the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in 1967. It forces on Palestinians a new predicament of separation that recalls the one they experienced from 1948 to 1967 when Palestinian families were divided and Palestinian villages “crossed” by the Green Line and when movement between Israel and the Jordan-controlled West Bank was policed and punished (Ghanim 2010; Korn 2003).

Like their Israeli Palestinian spouses and neighbors, the West Bank Palestinians that I befriended in Lod interpreted these restrictions as a disruptive measure taken by the Israeli state to weaken familial and communal ties among Palestinians. At the same time, they repeatedly spoke about the lifestyle of fellow-Palestinians in Lod as another factor that damages ties within the national community. Thus, for example, they often expressed moral concerns about the lack of education and the search for material wealth among the Palestinian youth in the city. As I demonstrate below, these moral concerns and judgments are largely connected to the disposition to invest in moral-social cohesion West Bank Palestinians have acquired growing up under an offensive military occupation.

West Bank Palestinians' moral concerns and judgments

Girls here are materialistic. They don't mind being married to a drug dealer if he is rich. For example, my husband's cousin married a drug dealer because he had a lot of money.

This comment made by Salma, a West Bank woman who has lived in Lod for about 12 years, encapsulates the main viewpoint that West Bank Palestinians hold about the lifestyle of Palestinian residents of Lod, which they perceive as excessively informed by the pursuit of material wealth. This view constructs drug dealing as the most evident sign of how materialism has morally damaged the Arab population of Lod. As I discussed above, Lod Palestinians frame their struggle for improved material conditions as a response to state discrimination against them. West Bank Palestinians, by contrast, negatively frame the emphasis on material wealth in the districts where they now live. Lacking practical knowledge of the state denigration, criminalization, and discrimination against which Lod Palestinians acquire their political rhetoric and their dispositions to resist the law, West Bank Palestinians do not share their neighbors' structural-political views on issues of poor education, criminality, and drugs. By contrast, they interpret these issues as connected to their neighbors' lifestyles, characterized by materialism.

Unlike most Palestinian residents of Lod, West Bank Palestinians living in the town are not particularly critical of the police checkpoints. By contrast, they mention the police checkpoints mainly when discussing drugs as symptoms of a

²⁵ In January 2012 the Israeli High Court used a demographic-cum-security discourse to uphold the prohibition on permanent residency for West Bank and Gaza spouses of Israeli citizens. In addition to splitting or relocating their families, these spouses are left with the option of applying for temporary permits which neither grant them access to health services nor allow them to work.

moral malaise among Lod Palestinians. For example, one day in late spring 2008, Najwa and Suad, two West Bank women, brought me to meet Sawsan, another West Bank woman, because they wanted me to hear about her struggle with her husband's drug addiction. On our way to Sawsan's house, we passed by the cement bars mentioned at the beginning of this article. Pointing at the bars, Najwa made this comment about the woman that we were about to meet:

Her husband [Sawsan's husband] is affectionate (*hanun*) but his friends wanted to go out every night to drink and smoke. Then he started to steal to buy drugs. He is lucky that he found Sawsan.

If drug dealers epitomize the "wrong" orientation of Lod Palestinians towards materialism, talks about drug consumption reveal feelings of commiseration towards Arab drug addicts as well as the desire to "rescue" them from a lifestyle that is perceived as immoral and self-destructive. In this regard, it is interesting to note that, while in their discussions of the 1948 Arab-Israeli war West Bank Palestinians consider Israeli Palestinians "lucky" because they did not become refugees, in their discussions of drug consumption and other supposedly immoral practices, they emphasize how Palestinians in Lod are "lucky" because they have been reunited with West Bank Palestinians. For example, Najwa considers Sawsan's husband "lucky" because through Sawsan he has been given the opportunity to discover a healthier lifestyle and deepen social relations with other (West Bank) Palestinians.

When we arrived at Sawsan's place, Sawsan welcomed us with a smile on her face, visibly eager to tell her "success story." Indeed, almost immediately she started a lengthy monologue about moving to Lod from a West Bank village, seeing cocaine for the first time, lying to her family about her husband's addiction, enduring physical abuse for four months, convincing her husband to go into rehabilitation, finding support in her sister (also living in Lod as a result of marriage) and in her female friends while her husband went to rehabilitation, and staying with her "drug free" husband in her village of origin for many weeks after rehabilitation. Throughout the telling of her tale, Sawsan emphasized how her life had improved drastically after her husband returned from rehabilitation. In her story, her personal courage in dealing with her husband's addiction exists alongside her emphasis on the West Bank as a place to breathe "fresh air" and come in contact with the moral core of the national community.

Along similar lines, Nawal, a West Bank Palestinian woman in her mid-twenties commented that her everyday communication with her husband, who also had a criminal record and drug consumption in his past, was at its best when they lived for two years in the refugee camp where she was born:

The place we relaxed the most was in Qalandia²⁶ [camp]. My husband liked the place too. In spite of the messy situation [the Second Intifada]... there are social relationships [in the camp].

Like Lod Palestinians, West Bank Palestinians interpret drug consumption as a form of suffering. However, as discussed above, the former relate it to the Israeli state's neglect and lack of recognition while the latter perceive it as a suffering that can be soothed through contacts with what they consider the "healthier" social relations among Palestinians in the West Bank.

²⁶ The names of West Bank localities have been changed.

In addition to the illegal economy, formal education offers another locus for the production of moral concerns and judgments. While they have been exposed to, and at times adopt, Lod Palestinians' perspective on how the state discriminates against Palestinian students in the city, West Bank Palestinians who have moved to Lod struggle to see the low level of education among Palestinians in Lod as a structural problem. Their point of departure is their "practical knowledge" of how Gaza and West Bank Palestinians have acquired education including university education, under conditions of military occupation. Thus, they tend to look at the high percentage of school dropouts among the Palestinian youth in Lod mainly as the result of the students' lack of willpower as well as their families' scarce support. This explanation emerges from how Laila and Wafa, two West Bank women in their early thirties compare levels of education among Palestinians in the West Bank and in Lod:

Laila speaking to Wafa: Have you seen the percentage of the students who passed the high school exam (*tawjihi*) [in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip]? The percentage is very high this year. Some students in Gaza had excellent grades in spite of the circumstances there and the unhelpful environment. Few Arab guys are educated here... There are only 10 or 15 good guys who don't smoke hashish or drink alcohol in the whole area. Most Lod guys are drug users and dealers.

The "unhelpful environment" of the Gaza Strip operates as the backdrop for Laila's perception that Lod Palestinians' educational underachievement is in large part connected to their lifestyles, especially their consumption of drugs.

The presence of a sizeable number of West Bank "collaborators" (informers) and their families who were relocated to the city by the Israeli state (Abdel al-Jawad and Beer 1994) reinforces West Bank Palestinians' emphasis on the importance of investing in moral-social cohesion. As I briefly discuss below, in the West Bank, the recruitment of informers by the Israeli security agencies is embedded in a collectivizing logic pitting the Palestinian ethnonational community against the Israeli army and, as a result, has deadly consequences. The killing of alleged "collaborators"²⁷ cements the role of morality in the preservation of a unified front against the Israeli army. As Kelly (2010, p. 181) puts, in the West Bank "the figure of the collaborator...has strong moral overtones:" "drug dealers and prostitutes have been seen as collaborators, partly on the ground that they lower the moral fiber of Palestinians and partly because their activities made them vulnerable to exploitation by the Israeli security services." In the eyes of West Bank Palestinians, the presence of relocated informers from the West Bank to Lod signifies that the moral boundaries of the national community need to be continuously policed against the Israeli state's recruitment of "weak" or "immoral" members. By contrast, while also connecting political informing to the exploitation of suffering co-nationals such as drug addicts, Lod Palestinians do not approach informing through a moralizing discourse focused on lifestyle. As demonstrated by case of Jamal, the Palestinian man from Lod who was arrested because he was running a food stand without permit, Lod Palestinians speak about informing in a matter-of-fact way as a system of exchange of resources for information that, regardless of their lifestyle,

²⁷ During the first Intifada (Uprising, 1987-1993) hundreds of alleged informers were killed in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip while others were relocated by the Israeli state inside Israel.

the Israeli state has forced on them. They also frame their struggle to obtain scarce resources outside this system in political terms. Further, unlike West Bank Palestinians, they are not particularly disturbed by the presence of West Bank informers. As Jamal puts it: “People I am afraid of are not those who come from outside, from Gaza—we know them—but those from the inside, people like me.”

Similar to their discomfort for the presence of West Bank “collaborators”—co-nationals who would have risked their lives if they had remained in the West Bank—West Bank Palestinians perceive Lod Palestinians’ emphasis on the improvement of their material conditions not as a part of their resistance against the state but, on the contrary, as a factor that morally corrupts them thus undermining their possible political struggles. In the words of a West Bank woman who moved to Lod from the Balata refugee camp:

If I lived in Balata [camp], I could express myself in strikes and demonstrations. But I can’t do this here. To live in a good living situation here, they [Palestinians in Lod] don’t express themselves. They don’t want to talk.

This harsh comment does not take into consideration the experience of surveillance that makes many Palestinians in Lod feel anxious about becoming active in explicit political practices. Nor does it grasp how many residents, most of whom have never been involved in illegal activities, find a certain level of (political) satisfaction when they see or speak about displays of material wealth among other Palestinians (if they are not renowned “collaborators”). Further, this comments hints at how, for West Bank Palestinians, who often live in sheltered circles of in-laws and fellow-“West Bankers” due to their undocumented status, it is difficult to develop practical knowledge of the different forms of political activism that exist among Palestinians inside Israel.

Growing up Palestinian in the West Bank: collective dispositions under military rule

The moral lens through which West Bank Palestinians perceive and evaluate everyday life in Lod does not originate from the activation of “ugly feelings” (Ngai 2007) such as envy or resentment towards more privileged segments of a population, in their case fellow-Palestinians who have citizenship and the attached freedom of movement. Nor does it partake of a process of symbolic reversal of material disadvantage into moral superiority as the one that often animates how marginalized groups perceive and represent members of more privileged groups (e.g., Lamont 2000, p. 246; Skeggs 2009, p. 39). By contrast, West Bank Palestinians’ moral concerns and judgments about Lod Palestinians’ everyday practices are connected to the practical sense of injustice, politics, and morality they have acquired under protracted conditions of military rule in the West Bank. They are also connected to feelings of caring about once unreachable co-nationals. Lacking practical knowledge of how, in Lod, subordination—as well as resistance to it—works through the law, especially criminal law, and, at the same time, striving to reconnect with their co-nationals, West Bank Palestinians respond to their new milieu—for example, the view of Palestinian youth who dropped out of school or the exposure to drug dealers and addicts—on the basis of the dispositional formation that already oriented them when they lived in the West Bank. This dispositional formation which values group cohesion as both a mode of survival and a form of political resistance has emerged over time especially in

refugee camps and villages through the negotiation of individual, familial, and communal lives in the context of a protracted military occupation (e.g., Rosenfeld 2004; Taraki 2006).

The West Bank Palestinians I met in Lod had grown up facing in their everyday lives a powerful and openly hostile army, which explicitly labeled them as “enemy nationals” and routinely targeted them with its repertoire of measures of collective punishment such as curfews, checkpoints, armed raids, and mass arrests and incarceration (e.g., Gordon 2008; Hajjar 2005). These measures were intensified during the Second Uprising (Intifada, 2000-2006), when West Bank Palestinian families were deeply affected by the Israeli army’s routine military invasions, destructions of infrastructure, and prolonged curfews (e.g., Allen 2008; Hass 2002). They also experienced the intensification of confinement and loss of land due to the construction of a system of walls and fences in addition to the already existing system of checkpoints and Jewish Israeli settlements (e.g., Hanafi 2009). More generally, since the beginning of the military occupation in 1967, the Israeli army has become an institution strongly woven around Palestinian lives starting from the thousands of military regulations imposed soon after 1967 to the establishment of a formal governing body—the so-called “Civil Administration”—in 1981, to its continued presence after the establishment of an authority of self-rule (the Palestinian Authority, PA) in 1993,²⁸ to the above-mentioned repression of the Second Intifada in the early 2000s.

As a “criterion of meaning,” the protracted and continuous experience of collective punishment under military rule has produced a general propensity to perceive moral-social cohesion as a fundamental resource to nourish from within and collectively defend against external forces, especially the Israeli army. As Abu-Nahleh (2006, p. 166) puts it in her study of a West Bank refugee family: “the role of the community is... fundamental in both economic and social relations to individuals’ social and national identity and their sense of belonging...Exiting it [the community] means suffering a total loss in a context that provides no other alternatives.” Along similar lines, during my fieldwork in a West Bank refugee camp, I documented an engrained “sense of the game” according to which, by cementing social cohesion, practices of solidarity such as neighborly visits after the Israeli army’s arrests and celebrations of the camp youth’s achievements are important practices for the preservation of the refugees’ sense of value as well as for their material survival. This disposition towards personal investment in group cohesion is often expressed in moral terms by supporting and personally enforcing informal social control on other members. As I mentioned above in my brief discussion of “collaborators” relocated from the West Bank to Lod, behaviors that are perceived as morally improper such as drug dealing are also interpreted as dangers to the collective body politic.²⁹

²⁸ In 1993 the PLO (Palestine Liberation Organization) and the Israeli government signed an agreement, the Oslo Accords, which led to the creation of the PA as an authority of self-rule for the Palestinians of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. A subsequent agreement, the 1994 Gaza–Jericho agreement, identified the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho as the first two places where the PA could operate as an authority of self-rule. The Oslo Interim Agreement, which was signed by the PA and the Israeli government in 1995, limited the area of Palestinian self-rule (area A) to the main West Bank towns, while the Israeli army retained full control of 61 percent of the West Bank (area C) and the rest was put under joint PA–Israeli control (area B).

²⁹ West Bank Palestinians also deal with humanitarian organizations. This is particularly relevant in the case of West Bank refugee camps where the UNRWA is a *de facto* welfare institution that provides camp dwellers with basic services ranging from health service to education to (limited) employment. In general, international donors are the backbone of both the PA’s and the UNRWA’s budget. Due to limited space, this article does not address West Bank Palestinians’

To sum up, the moral rhetoric aimed at everyday practices and communication that West Bank Palestinians manifest in their response to their proximate environment in Lod is connected to their disposition to invest in group cohesion and enforce shared standards of behavior and interaction. In the words of the above-mentioned West Bank woman who moved from the Qalandia refugee camp to Lod: “[camp] people interfere in the personal lives of others... You feel like all the people are one family even if they don’t love each other.” In turn, as I discussed here, the acquisition and sedimentation of this disposition is largely linked to their experiences of collective punishment under military occupation.

Conclusion

The interpretive divergence between the political rhetoric used by Lod Palestinians and the moral judgments made by West Bank Palestinians who moved to the city demonstrates the analytic potential of studying the role of dispositions in shaping everyday categories of perception and evaluation. Focusing on the practical inculcation of dispositions is particularly important for addressing issues of identity-formation and boundary-work, as well as processes of de-stigmatization and resistance among subordinated people. A dispositional approach to these issues is even more crucial when, as in the case of the Palestinians, the day-to-day experience of subordination varies because it involves different agencies of power and works through the distribution of different practices and discourses.

The theoretical integration of Bourdieu’s theory of *habitus* and feminist and critical race and legal insights into the production of “subjugated knowledge” developed here reorients sociology towards the relationship between experience and cognition (and affect)—away from the Geertz’s (1973a) anti-mentalistic injunction against “looking inside people’s heads.” As Lizardo (2011, pp. 31-32) puts it in his rendering of Bourdieu’s theory of *habitus* as a “practice-based theory of cognition,” a dispositional perspective on the production of categories of perception and evaluation goes beyond Geertz’s “thick description” of symbolic representations (for “post-Geertzian” anthropological approaches to Bourdieu and cognition, see Bloch 2012; Ingold 2000, pp. 157-171; Strauss and Quinn 1997). This perspective also supplements the recent “cognitive turn” in the sociology of ethnicity (Brubaker et al. 2004) by anchoring it to bodily experiences and practical inculcation. Indeed, this perspective conceives “cultural knowledge” not as “being imported by the mind into contexts of experience,” but on the contrary, as “itself generated within these contexts in the course of people’s involvement with others in the practical business of life” (Ingold 2000, p. 61, quoted in Lizardo 2011, p. 32).³⁰ This focus on “the practical business of life” in the production of meaning is particularly helpful for tracking, as I do in this article, how different

experiences of humanitarianism. However, while offering access to important symbolic and material resources, humanitarian agencies are also experienced as external forces that need to be dealt collectively. Thus, for example, by mobilizing collectively, refugee constituencies can (and do) engage the UNRWA in prolonged negotiations about the services it offers to the camps. Furthermore, they can (and do) pressure the UNRWA to extend its official role as deliverer of humanitarian services to one of legal and physical protection (Morris 2010; Rempel 2010).

³⁰ While other cultural sociologists (see, e.g., Alexander 2003) have found similarities between Bourdieu’s theory of *habitus* and Geertz’s “thick description” while also criticizing Bourdieu’s “reductionism,” Lizardo (2004; 2009; 2011) has embarked on a major new inquiry into the cognitive dimension of Bourdieu’s theory of *habitus* and its implications for cultural sociology and more broadly for the relationships between the social sciences and the cognitive and neural sciences.

conditions of subordination condition the acquisition and sedimentation of a sense of injustice and a sense of value from below.

The conceptualization of perceptions of injustice as integral components of the formative process of *habitus* as “socialized subjectivity” raises questions about the durability of dispositions acquired under conditions of subordination. On the one hand, while Bourdieu identifies the loss of correspondence between dispositions and the surrounding environment as a factor that can push people to critically engage with their “out-of-place” dispositions, my findings on West Bank Palestinians living in Lod demonstrate how struggling for survival in a specific context of subordination—and thus learning specific ways to obtain value—is a process of practical socialization, which, even when the conditions that have produced it disappear, can be particularly resistant to reconditioning. West Bank Palestinians’ moral rhetoric about the lifestyles of their fellow-Palestinians in Lod helps them preserve their *habitus* and secure their sense of self-worth. It offers a smooth complement to their embodied knowledge that moral cohesion is a necessary element for political struggle. Converging towards the political rhetoric used by Palestinians in Lod would require the renegotiation of this knowledge including the political valorization of everyday practices that, experientially, they tend to oppose to rather than include in the realm of political resistance.

On the other hand, “pedagogical work” can influence the conscious appraisal and renegotiation of one’s dispositions. As Bourdieu (1999, p. 340) puts it in his discussion on “*habitus* and freedom:”

Pedagogical action can, because of and despite the symbolic violence it entails, open the possibility of an emancipation founded on awareness and knowledge of the conditionings undergone and on the imposition of new conditionings designed durably to counter their effects.

The Israeli Palestinian hip-hop group DAM (“to remain” in Arabic) offers an example of “pedagogical action” engaging the Palestinian youth in Lod (Equeiq 2010; Schept 2010). While DAM’s songs give expression to the sense of injustice against the state discussed in this article, they also convey messages—such as “stop selling drugs,” “don’t grab a gun, grab a pen and write”—that encourage Lod Palestinians to renegotiate their political rhetoric and practices. Some lyrics explicitly invite them to mobilize collectively: “Oh Man! One hundred people were in a demonstration against home demolition the other day, ninety of them were Jewish!” From a Bourdieusian perspective, DAM is engaged in a “pedagogical” intervention into the political meanings and practices that I analyzed in this article.

Intersubjective relations can also be conducive to the reconditioning of dispositions (Bottero 2010). Indeed, through interactions, people can share concerns and negotiate differences. Yet, as discussed above, without a common experiential basis, intersubjective relations might not be enough for the renegotiation of the practical knowledge acquired under certain conditions of subordination, especially if protracted over time. Further, for subordinates contacts and communication are often fraught with difficulties. For example, the legal precariousness experienced by West Bank Palestinians in Lod not only constrains their mobility and everyday interactions but also limits their ability or willingness to renegotiate their dispositions. That said, during my fieldwork in Lod I noticed how, when discussing poor formal education in Lod, circles of West

Bank Palestinian women interspersed among the many comments about lack of parenting attention or youth's interest in school, comments such as "here [in Lod] they call it the effect of the occupation," thus revealing their exposure to the politicized perspective of their neighbors.

This brief discussion of possible ways in which the two sets of perceptions of injustice, politics, and morality here analyzed might change shows how the theoretical framework here used offers a way to explore the production, distribution, effects, and possible changes of these perceptions in relation to a broader process of practical socialization involving the whole person.

Finally, this article underscores the importance of studying how morality intersects with politics in the dispositional production of everyday perceptions and evaluations. Studying standards of proper behavior and lifestyles as well as how people speak about them can reveal a lot about how subordination works and is resisted on the ground (e.g., Gowan 2010). This study contributes to this attention to morality in everyday life by demonstrating how people's experience of structural-political subordination colors their everyday morality and conditions their articulation of moral concerns and political orientations. It draws attention to how, by influencing the sources of value available from below, different discursive and material environments can structure how subordinated people, who otherwise recognize their shared membership in a group, acquire distinct moral and political worldviews.

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